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SUBJECT: SOUTHERN SERBIA: ALBANIANS TO PARTICIPATE IN PARLIAMENTARY
ELECTIONS

[¶1](#). After weeks of negotiation, the major Albanian parties in southern Serbia officially agreed on December 4 to participate in Serbia's January 21 parliamentary elections, ending a boycott of national elections by the Albanian minority. The parties publicly signed an agreement in Bujanovac to support a joint list for elections, which could win up to two seats in the 250-seat Serbian parliament. The party leaders have already been in contact with the OSCE, NDI and Serbia's Republican Election Commission (RIK) to undertake the necessary steps to get on the ballot and prepare for election day.

[¶2](#). Comment: Post, along with OSCE and the UK Embassy, had been urging the Albanians to take this significant step towards fuller integration in Serbia. Post especially appreciates USOP and Embassy Tirana's efforts to reinforce this message with interlocutors, who in turn added useful pressure to the parties to participate. End Comment.

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